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Review of the standards of travel and entitlements for staff members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations system

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the review of the standards of travel and entitlements for staff members, members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations and entities of the United Nations system (A/61/801). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification.

2. The report of the Secretary-General was submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/255, section IV, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to initiate, within the framework of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), a review of the standards of travel and entitlements for staff members, members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations and organizations of the United Nations system, with a view to adopting a common policy at the United Nations system level, and to submit the results of the review to the General Assembly at the first part of its resumed sixty-first session.

3. The Advisory Committee notes that the report of the Secretary-General presents the results of a survey distributed by the CEB secretariat in late 2006 to 38 intergovernmental organizations, both inside and outside the United Nations system. As indicated in the report, a total of 17 entities responded (16 from the United Nations system and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe). The survey focused on mission travel accommodations, non-mission travel and the travel of representatives of Member States (see A/61/801, paras. 14-15). The conclusion, based on the results of the survey, is that it is clear that very little has changed since the issuance of the Joint Inspection Unit report of 2005 (see A/60/78) and that travel policies continue to differ, sometimes substantially, across the system, but mostly as regards mission travel.

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4. The Advisory Committee is of the view that the report of the Secretary-General, as submitted, is lacking in that it only partially addresses the request of the General Assembly. The report presents a compilation of data but does not indicate any action taken or proposed to be taken, nor does it make any proposals for adopting a common policy to better harmonize the conditions of travel at the United Nations system level supplementing the comments of CEB (see A/60/78/Add.1) in response to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the issue of travel entitlements is not currently on the agenda of CEB.

5. **The Advisory Committee regrets that CEB did not fully respond to the mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 60/255. The Committee reiterates its recommendation that the Secretary-General be requested to submit a comprehensive report, on the basis of a CEB review and specific proposals, with a view to harmonizing standards of travel for staff of the United Nations common system, indicating the measures that can be implemented under the authority of the Secretary-General, as well as those that will require the approval of the General Assembly (see A/60/78/Add.1, para. 4). These should take into account the study of the International Civil Service Commission on the subject (see A/60/78/Add.1, para. 2) and the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (see A/60/78), as well as the various recommendations made by the Advisory Committee and the decisions taken by the General Assembly in this regard.**